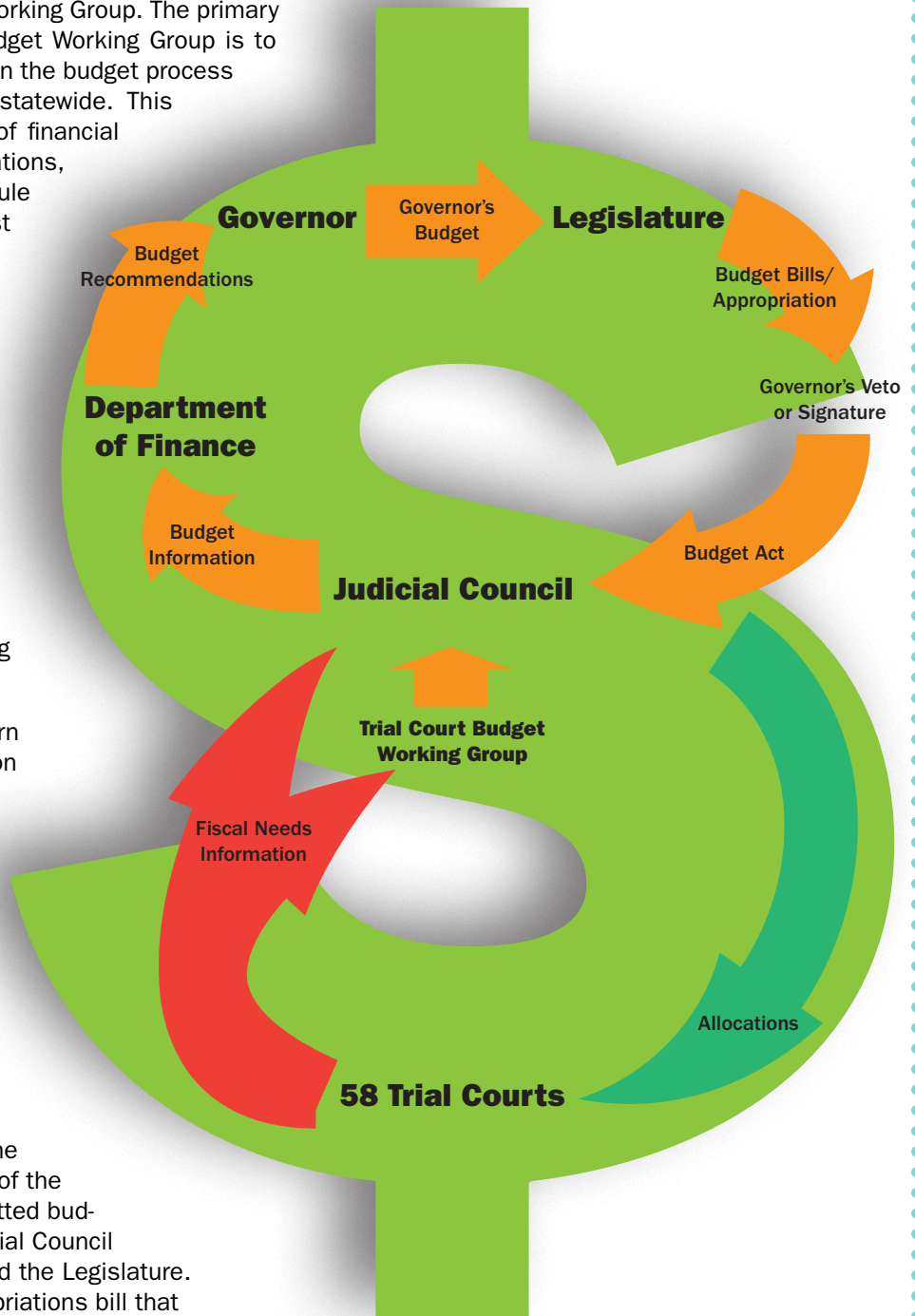


# The Trial Court Budgeting Process

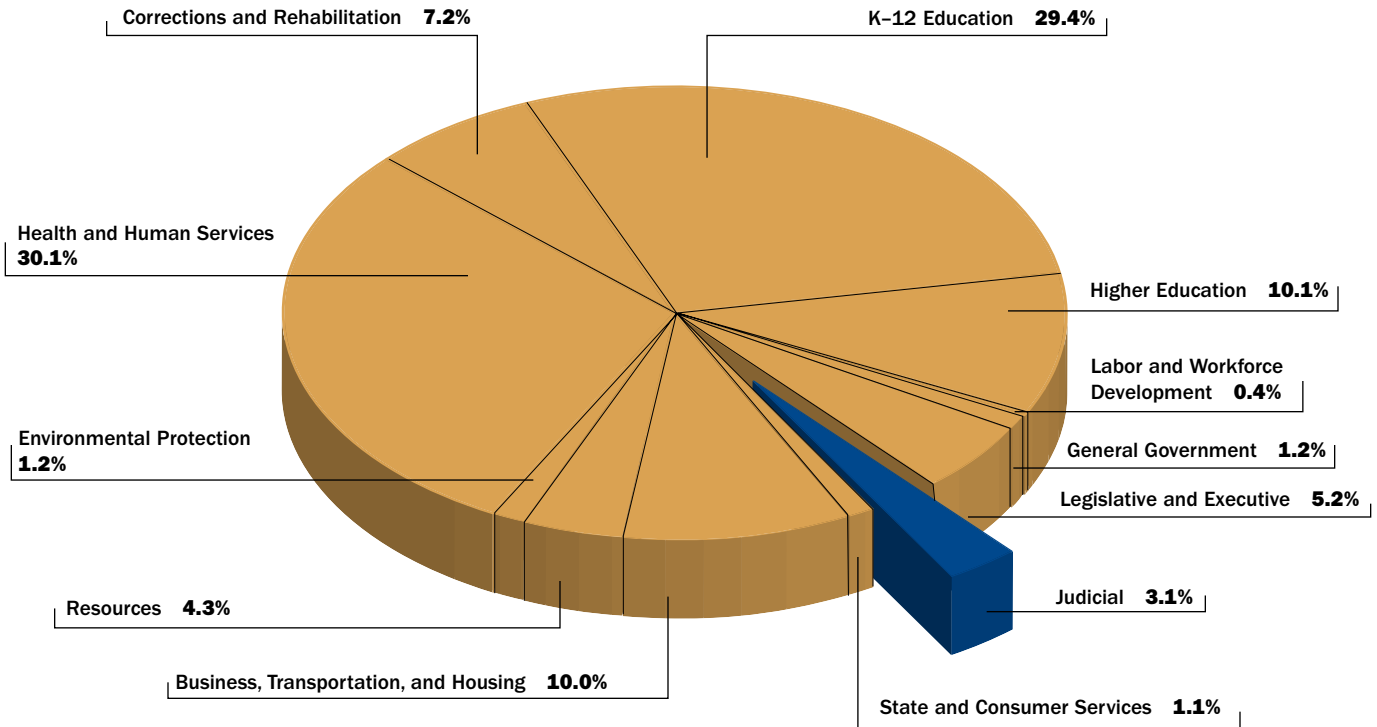
Budgeting within the judicial branch is complex, collaborative, and time-consuming and the trial courts are integral to the process. It requires substantial annual input from all 58 trial courts and the Trial Court Budget Working Group. The primary responsibility of the Trial Court Budget Working Group is to advise the Administrative Director on the budget process for the benefit of all trial courts statewide. This includes development and review of financial policies, funding requests, allocations, and other issues. By rule of court (rule 10.107), the working group “must include trial court judicial officers and trial court executive officers reflecting the diversity of state trial courts, including location, size, and adequacy of funding.” The budget working group is made up of 15 trial court presiding judges and 15 court executive officers and is based on a rotating membership. Over the last several years, 52 of the state’s 58 trial courts have been represented on the working group; this year this number is expanding to 55 courts.

While the current economic downturn has been an overriding consideration in recent years, the working group considers many factors in developing its recommendations, including input from our colleagues in other trial courts.

Following detailed analysis, review, and recommendation by the Trial Court Budget Working Group, the Administrative Director and his staff draw up major budget proposals that are transmitted to the Executive and Planning Committee of the council. The completed and fully vetted budget proposal then goes to the Judicial Council for presentation to the Governor and the Legislature. The Legislature produces an appropriations bill that contains funding for the courts. In addition to any new funding, the trial courts receive annual baseline funding for ongoing operating costs. With regard to new funding, once the State Budget is enacted, funding is appropriated to the branch. The council, which itself is composed largely of trial court leaders, provides final approval on court allocations and distributes the funding to the trial courts.

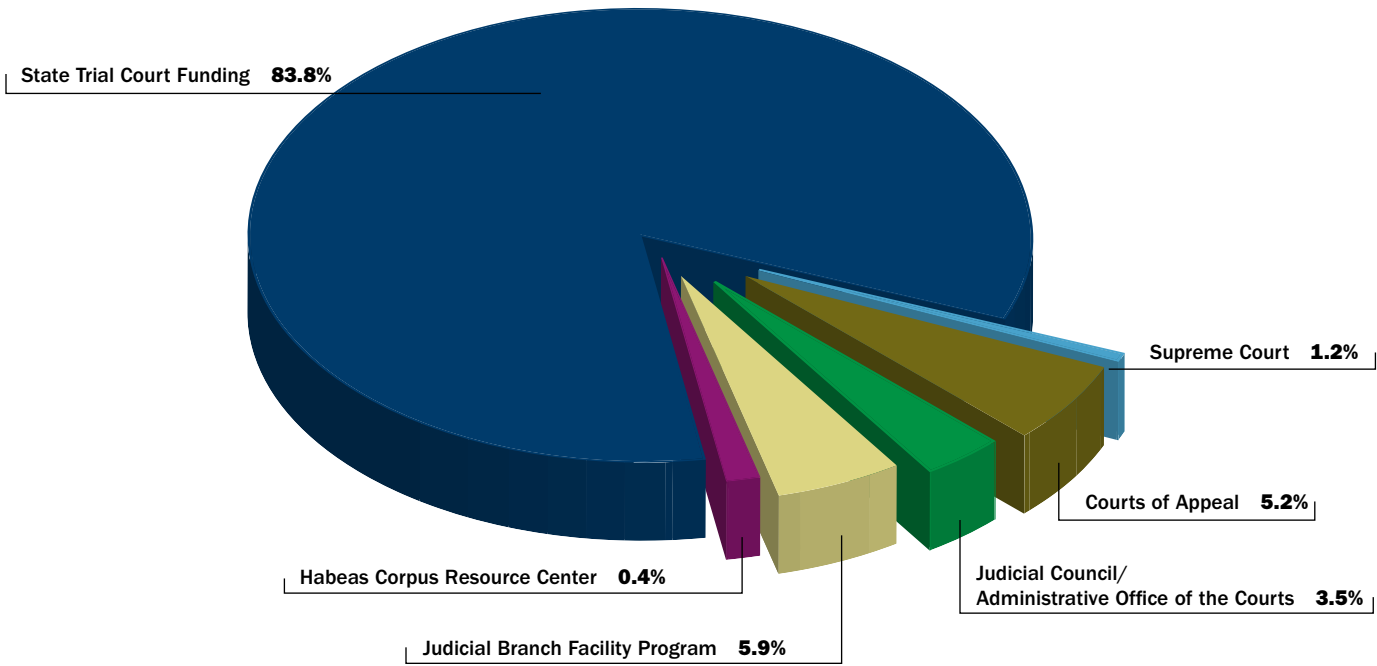


## The Judicial Branch Budget Is Only 3.1% of the Overall State Budget



FY 2010–2011 overall State Budget of \$125.2 billion includes General Fund and other funds. Judicial branch budget is only 2.2% of state General Fund.

## Funding for the Trial Courts Represents 84% of the Judicial Branch Budget



FY 2010–2011 total judicial branch budget: \$3.8 billion

Source: Dept. of Finance, Governor's Veto Budget Summary for FY 2010–2011.